



GrowVT-Ed Update

www.growvted.org

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GrowVT-Ed is currently supporting 85 teachers, paraeducators and substitute teachers pursuing licensure through the Peer Review Process. All but approximately five candidates are seeking initial certification, while five are adding an endorsement to their existing license. (For example, a certified PE Teacher who is teaching middle school mathematics on a provisional license.) Participants meet each Tuesday, alternating between Core Seminars (focusing on the Vermont Licensure Portfolio) and Content Seminars (learning and documenting their content competencies). The following is a breakdown of content areas:

School Counseling - 4
World Language - 1
Art - 3
MS/HS Science - 3
MS/HS English - 6
MS/HS Social Studies - 6
MS/HS Mathematics - 6
Elementary - 19
Preschool - Gr. 3 - 6
Special Education - 17
Music - 2
Technology Educator - 1
Theater - 1
Multi-lingual Teacher - 1
Physical Education - 3
School Social Worker - 2
Work-based Learning - 1
CTE - 1

With over 1200 provisional and emergency licenses in the education field currently, this represents a small percentage, but the work the candidates are doing both in the classroom and on their Peer Review Portfolio is admirable.

In our November survey, participants wrote their “stories” - A few of which I have included below:

I gave up teaching when I moved to Vermont because of the Praxis exam and all this work that was required to become certified here from another country. I worked as support staff for 12 years specifically because of this. Through my work with the VT-NEA I was connected with Juliette and here I am, two years later, doing the job I dreamed of, while re-learning how to be a teacher in the Vermont school system.

I started my journey in college. As an undergraduate, I had to drop my education classes due to health reasons. After achieving my Bachelors Degree in English, I went on to begin pursuing a Masters in Elementary Education. I completed 18 credits before I needed to shift my focus to my growing family and put my goal of teaching on hold. Now that my youngest is in school full-time, I am shifting my focus back to my career goals. I have never stopped wanting to become a teacher. It is my passion. I worked as a permanent substitute last school year and was able to secure a position as a special Ed para for this school year while I work on Special Ed Certification through the GrowVT program.

I have been a para-educator for 7 years at the same school district. The last 5 years I have had the opportunity to work with the same teacher. I have learned so much from him, and over the years I have taken on many of the teacher responsibilities and co-teaching with him. I have been told from my husband and my co-workers that I would make a great teacher and I should pursue licensure. I have the education, knowledge and now the motivation. I am excited to have this opportunity to finally pursue getting a license for pre-k to 3rd grade. I learned about this program through a work email and it was the perfect timing in my life to go ahead and do this class and advance my career.

My story: 2006 I went to college to be a teacher and realized I didn't want to teach in MA, so I never went through with the testing or completing my portfolio. After college, I moved to the Northeast Kingdom, where I worked as a paraprofessional for 6 years. During this time, I started working on my VT peer review portfolio and my Masters in Education. In year 6, I was offered a job that I couldn't refuse, that drove me down a different path. Fast forward almost 10 years and I reentered the school system as a substitute teacher. In March of 2022 I started looking into how I could get my teaching license, at this time I was told about GrowVT-Ed. In October 2022, I was offered a 7/8 middle school Social Studies position, in the district I was substituting in!

My journey was a bit long, but I am on my way. After I graduated from high school I got married and I started my family. I decided to return to college after my youngest of five children turned three. I figured I could go back to work full time after he started school. I earned my degree in ECE in 2005. I started working in a high school as a paraeducator. I also decided my education was not enough, went back to school, and finally in 2011 earned my Masters In Education, while raising my children and working full time as a paraeducator. Then GrowVT came to be and I was able to finish what I had started - to be a teacher. Without this chance I would still be a very overqualified paraeducator, who was about to give up and retire from education.

There are several participants who are ready to submit their portfolios this month (one has submitted already), with increasing numbers through the spring (those with 6/3-/2023 license expiration dates). Well over half of the candidates have provisional licenses that expire in June, 2024 and whose goal for completion are summer and fall of 2023.

This summer will bring “boot camps” that will include full-day work sessions to complete their portfolios. We also expect another cohort beginning next fall.

Respectfully,

Dr. Juliette Longchamp
Director of Professional Programs, Vermont-NEA